18: Savonnet--5 E-5 (ca. 1955) 1956 MS37 Senegal MS37 Thies

/73 cont./

175 369 499 133 The surveys for the future course of this railway revealed that the shortest route would have to follow the Atlantic coast, but since this is bordered by dunes it would necessitate some important construction work. The passage across the slope of Thiès was also a serious obstacle, but the "Ravin des Voleurs" made access to the plateau possible; the line would thus follow the valley which cuts the brow of the hill, then the depression which follows the plateau to the east, and would pass in front of the military fort established at its extremity.

175 369 [361] The fortune of Thiès was made: as early as 1885, the date of the opening of the railroad, the merchants of Rufisque set up branches there; a plan for dividing the future city into lots was outlined. This plan, unfortunately, foresaw the development of the city only north of the line, along the trail connecting Thiès with Rufisque and Dakar. A Catholic [797] mission was established in the vicinity, and in 1893 the first civil administrator occupied the new residence built near the Faidherbe redoubt.

175 369 439 [496] [492] The groundnut policy developed successfully; 20,000 tons of groundnuts were shipped by rail from the Thiès station in 1890 (3). Commerce, however, was not established in

3. Convoys of camels competed with the railway up to 1910 and transported their cargo to the port of Rufisque. Thiès was the last stop before reaching the quays of embarkation 50 kilometers away.

[366] [441] permanent fashion in the escale: only during the period of trading (from November to May) did the European employees sent by the firms of Rufisque live in the city and buy groundnuts, millet, cotton ... at their branches; from May to November they returned to Rufisque, and most of the shops in Thiès were closed, the city seemingly dead.

/14 cont./

during which commercial operations in groundnuts are authorized. It is opened and closed each year by governmental decree. In general it begins at the end of November or the beginning of December and closes at the end of April. The date of opening the campaign is set about two months after the beginning of the harvest, in order to avoid premature uprooting and to favor the reimbursement of the seed advanced. This system nevertheless leads to some smuggling in the south, because the navétanes, anxious to return home, and the peasants, without any money, are tempted to sell in Gambia. At the time of the close, the transactions have been over for a long time, but this decision prevents the eventual sale /15/ of the seed distributed by the Mutuelles. In order to have the commodity brought in gradually and to avoid heavy transactions at the beginning of trade, operations are suspended from Friday to Monday. Nevertheless by the end of the month of January nearly all of the harvest has been negotiated.

2) The "points of trade." Since 1932 the operations of selling must take place in the localities called points of trade or "escales" located on the railroad or a road (Circular of 13 July 1932). These points of trade, which were 175 in number in 1935, now number more than 300. The limitation, in 1932, on the number of the points of trade was a response to the desire to moderate the rhythm of the selling and to avoid the proliferation of intermediaries. The recent creation of new escales is devoted to the conquest of new lands and is an attempt to avoid the abuses of cultivation on the lands near the former points of trade.

The accession of a locality to the rank of escale makes it legally an urban center, with the obligation of division into lots /lotissement/ and, for the merchants, permanent buildings. The campaign is a period of great animation for the escale. The merchants or traders open their bank of purchase or "factory." Traditionally, intermediaries, or "masters of language," conduct the producer to the factory. The groundnuts, transported by donkeys and in bags loaned by the trader, are weighed and emptied

/15 cont./

into the secco, an area with a floor of hard earth or cement, closed off by sheet metal. The agriculturalist, paid forthwith, immediately spends the sum received, in settling the sums owed to the trader and in buying from among the manufactured objects of the same factory the most diverse articles: cloth, playthings, articles for bicycles, etc. Thus the same trader realizes two profits in the traditional system.

3) The agents of trade. Until the Second World War, the trade in groundnuts was in the hands of about 3,000 private traders organized in a strict hierarchy. At the top, the trade was controlled by the large import-export houses, especially of Bordeaux origin, Maurel et Prom, Peyrissac, Vézia, etc., to which was added the C. F. A. O. of Marseilles origin, and the S. C. O. A. Franco-Switzerland. These firms, whose central agencies for Senegal are in Dakar, make arrangements for the "banks" and "agencies" in the principal localities, for "factories" in the escales, and for "operations" in the bush. These commercial houses concentrate the purchases of their various traders and provide them with imported products. They are supported during the campaign by the banks of the mother country or their agencies in Senegal.

The independent French merchants, often former employees of the firms, play the role of intermediary /demi-grossiste/ in the escales. /16/ They buy directly from the producers or from the African sub-trader and bag and forward /the product/ to the commercial houses in the shipping ports. They have been very harshly affected by the economic crisis of the 1930's and then by the war, in particular by the mobilization, which facilitated the establishment of many Lebano-Syrian traders.

The treaties of 1919 facilitated the arrival in Africa of these Lebano-Syrians. They devote themselves essentially to commerce, and they have on the whole succeeded, because, living near the autochthons, they have adopted their way of life and are contented with much less than the independent Europeans. During the trade, they are generally commission agents of the firm that they represent. They receive a commission for each metric ton of groundnuts purchased, and sell in

/17/

438 442 2. The "circuit" of groundnuts. The purchase of the groundnuts in the escale and storing them in the secco of the trader constitute only one step in the complicated circuit that the groundnuts take from the place of production to the port of exportation or to the oil-factories.

• 492 438 1) The means of transport. From the place of production to the escale, the groundnuts essentially utilize the traditional modes of transport, donkeys throughout the country and camels in the north. The decree of 4 September 1935 has forbidden the [656] use of trucks. Its aims were to avoid bulky hauls, purchases at [231] a low price at the place of production, and, above all, to encourage local animal-husbandry. This system, however, carries with it grave defects. Most often transport on the back of a donkey is more expensive for the producer than transport by truck because the camel-drivers and donkey-drivers impose their own price on the peasants who do not have animals. Moreover, the transporter guides the seller to a trader whom the seller did not choose. Today, however, more and more derogations are permitted, because in the south, where the groundnut is progressing, the tsetse interdicts animal husbandry, and in the other regions the overworked animals are incapable of doing the transporting at the end of trade. Finally, certain [874] co-operatives which pretend "to collect" and not to buy do send trucks to the places of production.

494 438 From the secco of the trader to the port nearby or to the railroad station, transport is handled by trucks. It is essentially the commercial firms, the traders, or the local oil-makers who use them. There are few professional transporters because the traffic is essentially seasonal. The generally bad [491] condition of the unpaved roads, except for the "Transgambienne" from Dakar to Ziguinchor, causes a rapid wearing-out of equipment, whose amortization is a heavy burden on the budget of the merchants.

497 438 The Dakar--Saint-Louis railroad and especially the Dakar-Niger transport more than 200,000 metric tons of groundnuts

[Text continues on p. 21--Analyst]

19: Pehaut--20 K-4 (no date) 1961 MS37 Senegal MS37

/Between pp. 16-17/ Plate II

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A. Trade: transporting the groundnuts to the trader (Diourbel).

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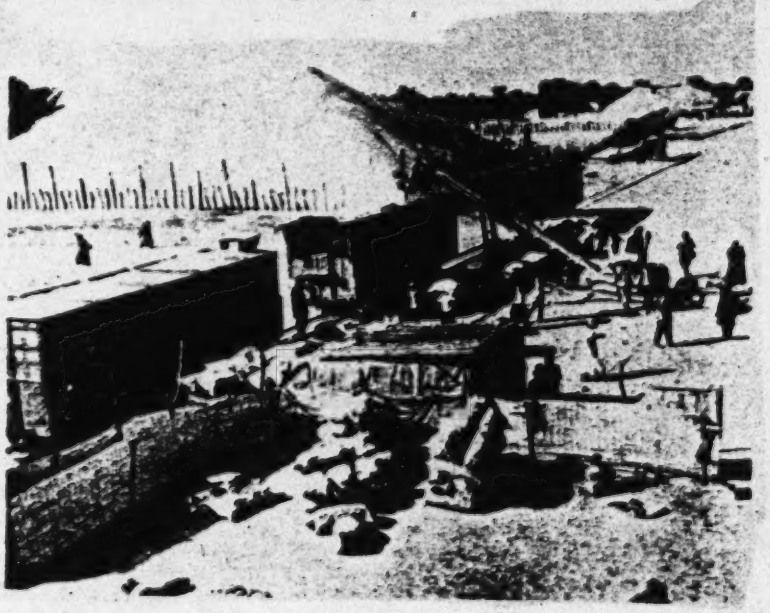

B. Loading the loose groundnuts into the cars at the station in M'Backé.

/121 cont./

233 animals to drink. Nevertheless, cattle-raising remains a worthwhile enterprise, a herd doubling in three years.

[232] [654] [492] No serious attempt to improve the breed of cattle has been made by the administration.

Since the multiplication of automobiles, the horse has been somewhat forsaken. The breed is small, but sturdy.

/122/ As for sheep and goats, their rustic breed is resistant. This breeding does not require any care.

313 Forests. Forests cover a notable part of the circle. They must be protected because they are on the way to progressive disappearance as a result of the abuses of brush fires and systematic clearing by the native, wishing to increase his crops.

There is no methodical exploitation of the forests. The exploitation is confined to the cutting of palm trees for the production of charcoal. There still exist, however, some beautiful stands of hardwoods, especially of Gambia mahogany, or false mahogany, particularly in Bas-Saloum.

To the east, between Kaffrine and Koungheul, stocks of small bamboos exist, especially in the humid depressions. [342] These bamboos are cut by the natives who make panels out of them, called "crintings," to serve as closings or veranda partitions. [435] The price of these panels, from two to three meters long, varies between 15 and 25 francs.

316 Quarries. There are many laterite quarries, exploited for the most part. The stone is not as hard as at Rufisque or at Dakar.

317 433 Salt marshes. There is industrial exploitation of the salt marshes at Kaolack. The Société des Salines of Sine-Saloum has exploited the salt marshes at Diorana since 1915. The region of the Saloum is very fortunate from this viewpoint. The constant evaporation of the water of this arm of the sea and its many branches gives the liquid mass a degree of saturation much higher than that of the ocean water.